

5 1897
AND ALL THE PEOPLE SHOUTED, AND SAID, GOD SAVE THE KING! — I SAMUEL 13:14



SERMON

PREACHED TO THE

QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES

OF CANADA

AND

EX-MEMBERS OF THE REGIMENT

ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF

The Diamond Jubilee of the Queen's Accession

BY

REV. CANON HILL, M.A.

RECTOR TRINITY CHURCH, ST. THOMAS, ONT.

*And Honorary Chaplain 25th Batt. Light Infantry, who served as
Sergeant in the Volunteer Company of the London Devon
Regiment during the Boer War, 1900*

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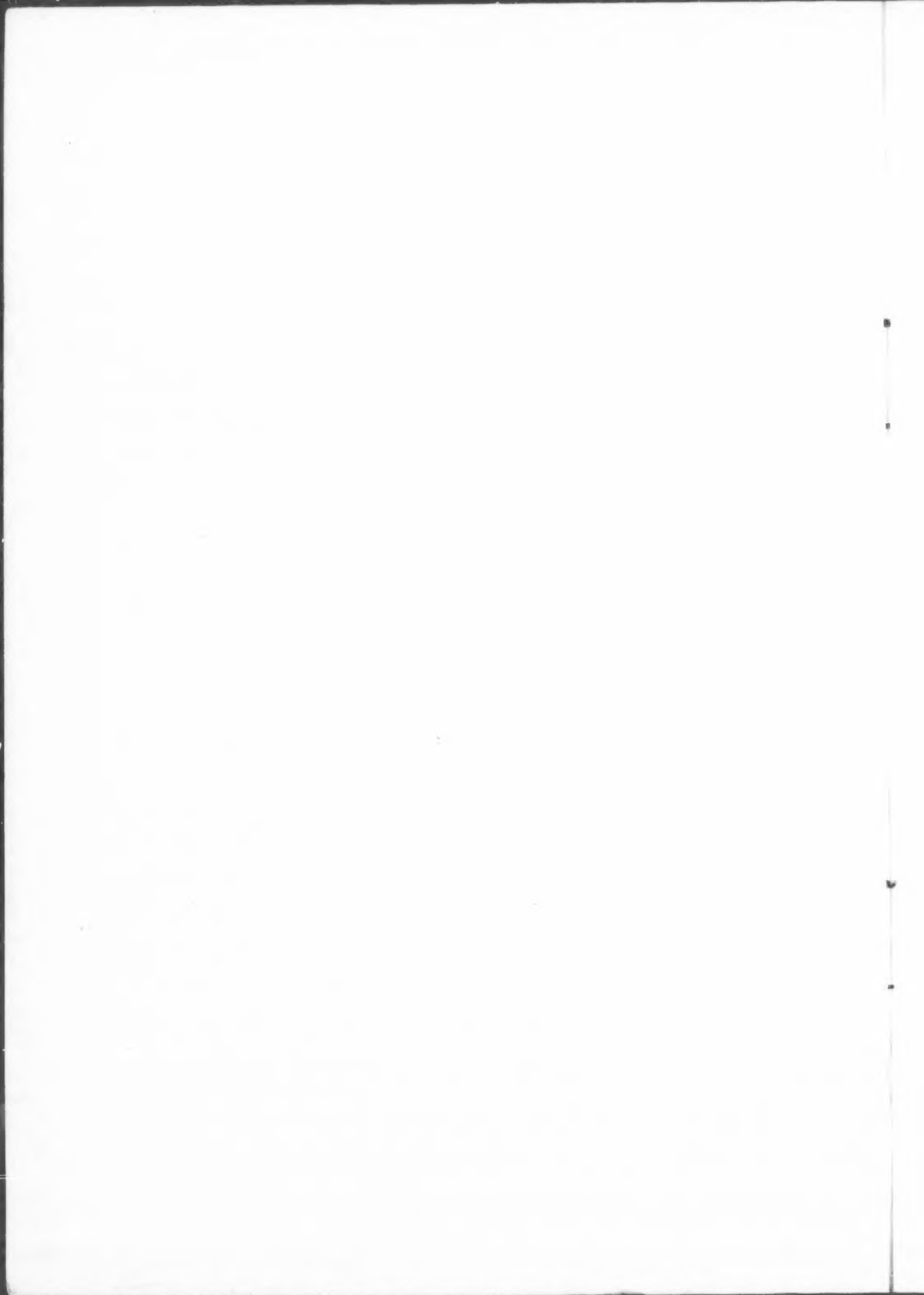
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SERMON.

"And all the people shouted, and said, God save the King."—I. SAMUEL X., 24.

OFFICERS, non-commissioned officers and men of the Queen's Own, and ex-members of the regiment—you who constitute the battalion of to-day, and we who represent the battalion of yesterday—are we not all alike proud of, and do we not all glory in the name which the regiment has borne for so many years, and bears now, the "Queen's Own"? You, volunteers, have the honour of having your names on the present muster-roll; we, civilians, glory in the thought that we, too, once bore the initials Q. O. R. on our shoulder-straps, and the regimental number on our shakos, and we look back with retrospective eye over the long years to "the days of auld lang syne," and recall the company and battalion drills, the marches out, the field days, the guard mounting at the old frame drill-shed, and (some of us) the active service in 1866. You, volunteers of to-day, feel a justifiable pride in your regiment, and are fired with a laudable ambition to maintain its well-earned reputation as one of the crack city corps of the Canadian M'litia, to reach the highest attainable standard of efficiency, and to foster a proper *esprit de corps* among its members. We, gray-haired ex-volunteers, cherish in our inmost hearts many pleasant recollections of happy hours spent with the old regiment, and, blended with them, come sad memories of beloved comrades, "*Que, pro patria pugnantes occubuerunt apud Limeridge*" (who, whilst fighting for their country, fell at Limeridge) thirty-one years ago, of others who have since gone to join the great majority, and of still others who are far away, whom we may never meet again on earth.

"For seas hae braid between us roared
Sin' auld lang syne."

Yes, we have felt in the past, and you feel to-day, that

"'Tis a glorious charter,
that is breathed in the words,
'I'm a Queen's Own man.'"

The *Queen's Own Regiment*. It is a glorious name to bear! And I doubt not, Queen's Own, that you all realize and rejoice in its significance. You feel that you *belong* to our Most Gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria, and have given to her your sincere, loyal devotion, and are ready to be faithful, even unto death, in her defense. We read in the First Book of Chronicles that, while David was in the stronghold of Ziklag, certain men of Benjamin and Judah came to him, and when he asked

them whether they came with friendly or hostile intent, the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said: "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse; peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers, for thy God helpeth thee." Now, I am sure, Queen's Own, that you are all ready to re-echo the words of Amasai as giving expression to your heart-felt allegiance to our Queen, and say: "Thine are we, Victoria, and on thy side, thou daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent; peace, peace be unto thee, and peace to thine helpers, for thy God helpeth thee. We are the *Queen's Own*!"

And, Queen's Own, much as you may have gloried before in the name you bear, you are, methinks, specially glad to be called the Queen's Own Regiment on this morning of the anniversary of the Queen's own accession to the throne. That is the thought that is prominently present in all minds to-day. This day marks the completion of sixty years of the happiest, longest, most prosperous and progressive reign in British history. The Diamond Jubilee has come, and we are assembled here to offer to our bountiful Father above the tribute of praise. We thank Him, this morning, for having given us such a sovereign to reign over us, and for having heard the prayers of His people, and for sixty years with His favour beheld her, by the grace of His Holy Spirit inclining her to His will and enabling her to walk in His way, granting her to live so many years in health and wealth, and strengthening her to vanquish and overcome her enemies.

Yes; this is the anniversary of the Queen's accession. On the 20th day of June, 1837, at five o'clock in the morning, the young Princess was awakened out of her sleep to hear the news that she was Queen of Great Britain and Ireland; and at eleven o'clock of the same day she met Lord Melbourne and the Privy Council, read her speech to them, took the oath and the proclamation of her accession was signed.

Sixty long years have passed since that auspicious morning, and during these three-score annual revolutions of our earth around the sun our noble Queen

"Has worn the white flower of a blameless life
In that fierce light which beats about a throne."

And, even as the aged prophet of Israel pointed out Saul the son of Kish to the assembled people, and said to them: "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" all the people shouted and said: "God save the King!" So on this Jubilee morning we, and all her loyal subjects throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, as we remember that this is the anniversary of Her Most Gracious Majesty's accession, and as we think of all the noble qualities of heart and head that have distinguished her from all other monarchs, feel constrained to unite in one glad shout that shall echo the wide world round, and say: "*God Save the Queen!*"

Verily, when we contrast our noble, gracious Queen with her predecessors on the throne, we have abundant cause for thankfulness that we have been blessed with such a sovereign. "In her," according to Macaulay, "her subjects have found a wiser, gentler, happier Elizabeth." No former monarch has so thoroughly comprehended the great truth that the powers of the crown are held in trust for the people, and are the means and not the end of government. This enlightened policy has entitled her to the glorious distinction of having been the most constitutional monarch England has ever seen. Not less important has been the example set by Her Majesty in the practice of every social and domestic virtue. Her stainless life and her unobtrusive piety have tended to elevate the standard of morality, public and private, and have obtained for her the respect and admiration of the civilized world.

Marvellous, indeed, has been the Empire's progress in prosperity and enlightenment during Her Majesty's reign. Not only has there been a wonderful expansion and growth in territory, in population, in commerce, in revenue, in shipping, in railway extension, but also a mighty advance in the religious, educational and industrial development of the Empire. The Victorian Era is justly considered the brightest in the history of the British nation. Not only has the nation increased its material prosperity under the rule of Her Majesty; its progress in the fields of learning, in the arts, in science, in literature—in short, in all that tends to ennoble mankind—has been no less marked. Truly her's has been a most eventful reign. A history of the past sixty years would fill many volumes. It would deal with many mighty events, and would show more rapid advancement in all that constitutes the moral, intellectual and physical well-being of a people than characterizes any preceding entire century since England became a nation. Her reign will ever be a memorable one to us Canadians, as the reign during which the North American Provinces were confederated under the title of the Dominion of Canada—the reign that witnessed our birth as a mighty nation! Her reign will always be looked back to as the one in which the scattered members of the Empire were brought into more intimate fellowship with one another and with the mother-land; the reign which saw the general development of the railway system in Great Britain and its rapid extension throughout all civilized countries; the reign in which the electric telegraph was constructed, and the first successful attempts made to use steam for the purposes of trans-oceanic navigation; the reign which witnessed the inauguration of an improved postal system, the laying of sub-marine cables, the invention of the telephone, the general utilization of electric power, and which, by an infinite number of other agencies, immensely increased the comfort and convenience of the people; the reign in which so many constitutional, political and social reforms were consummated, and the principle of religious toleration under-

stood and carried out to its greatest extent ; the reign in which temperance in all things became, more than at any previous period, an accepted rule of human conduct, in which more adequate provision was made for suffering humanity, and in which there was a greater mingling of mercy with justice in the administration of the laws of the realm. And, above all, the efforts made during the reign to spread the truths of Christianity throughout the world have been such as the British nation never made before. It has carried the gospel into the farthest ends of the earth, and thrown the light of the word upon many benighted people. The Victorian Era has been pre-eminently an age of missions. And in all this advancement the gracious influence of Her Majesty has been strongly felt. As one of our Senators at Ottawa said a few days ago: "It would be gross flattery to attribute the progress and greatness of the Empire exclusively to the Queen's abilities, but it can be fairly claimed for Her Majesty that she has been one of the hardest labourers in the cause of advancing British civilization. She has utilized the genius and reconciled the jealousies of statesmen. Her authority has never been used to postpone or prevent the accomplishment of any project which was for the good of her people or the upbuilding of her Empire. The Queen has indeed been a great stateswoman, possessing all the qualities of a wise and sagacious ruler." She has been, during her long and useful reign, a noble wife, mother and Queen, and the many virtues which she has exemplified in her own person have had an influence not confined within the limits of her Empire. She has earned the love of her own people, and (as I said before) the respect and admiration of other nations. That she may be spared to add many more years to the completed sixty of her glorious reign is the desire, not only of the millions of her own loyal subjects, but of the world at large. In every quarter of the globe is breathed to-day the heart-felt prayer, "God Save the Queen."

The Victorian Era has not only been marked by marvellous progress in the arts of peace, but there has also been a wonderful expansion in the Empire's fighting strength. The three score years of Her Majesty's reign have seen England engaged in many wars; and on many a hard-fought field has victory crowned her arms. Some of us can remember how our hearts were thrilled with glad thankfulness and justifiable pride that we also were Britons, when we heard of "Alma," "Balaclava," "Inkerman," and "Sebastapol." We remember still the horror and grief that filled our minds as the reports came to us across the sea of the atrocities of the Indian Mutiny, and how the final triumph of the British arms shed an undying glory around the honoured names of Sir Henry Havelock and Sir Colin Campbell. We recall the Abyssinian expedition, the Ashantee war, the fights in Afghanistan, the defeat and capture of Cetewayo, the bombardment of Alexandria, the glorious battle of Tel-el-Kebir. We

recollect many a brief campaign in China, in the Soudan, in Southern Africa, on the borders of Her Majesty's Indian possessions; and, ever and anon, some tale of heroic daring while "facing fearful odds," of frightful risks run to save a comrade's life, of splendid devotion to the British flag even unto death, has reached us, telling us that British "*pluck*" still characterizes Britain's sons, that the race of British heroes is not extinct, and that the British regular of to-day is, as his forefathers were, "a first-class fighting man," and a worthy descendant of "the deathless ones who shine afar in arms," whose gallant deeds are recorded on the pages of the Empire's pre-Victorian history.

What is true of the British regular of to-day is true also, I believe, of the Canadian volunteers. The fact that a man is a native-born Canadian does not weaken, nay rather it seems to intensify his loyalty to the British throne. We, Canadians, are true and firm in our allegiance to our sovereign, to the Empire of which our country forms an integral part, and to the dear old world-honoured red cross flag of England. We realize that Canada's future welfare, prosperity and progress depend on the maintenance of the British connection, and can conceive of no more terrible national calamity than that any other banner should ever float over our country. That is the feeling which animates the breast of every Canadian volunteer, and he is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to save his native land from such a fate. Canadian volunteers have done noble service in the past, and are ready, if called on, to do so again. The same spirit of ardent patriotism and unswerving devotion to sovereign, Empire, and country, which animated the brave men who fought under General Brock, "the hero of Upper Canada," at Queenston Heights, and wept over this great leader fallen in the fight, and who battled with the enemy at Lundy's Lane; who went forth at duty's summons in 1837 and 1838; who responded to their country's call to arms in 1866; who went on the Red River expedition and up the Nile with Woseley; who cheerfully and heroically endured the hardships, difficulties and exposure of the passage of the "gaps" in the uncompleted railway along Lake Superior's northern shores, of the long forced marches and prairie bivouacs; who charged at "Batoche," and routed the foe at "Cut Knife Creek." The same spirit, I say, still dwells in the bosoms of Canadian volunteers, and renders them not unworthy descendants of the heroes of 1812, not unworthy brothers of the men who crushed out the North-West Rebellion in 1885; and should fair Canada, in her sore need, stretch out to her volunteers her appealing hands, and cry, "My sons, will ye fight for me?" they are prepared to give a practical answer to her question—an answer given not with the lips only, but with lead and steel.

Now, among Canadian volunteers, I am sure that the members of the Queen's Own Rifles are second to none in their loyalty to the throne.

The very fact that you have enrolled yourselves in the ranks of the Canadian Militia, that you wear Her Majesty's uniform, that you are endeavouring earnestly to fit yourselves by drill, by rifle practice, by cheerful submission to military discipline, to go forth, at any moment, trained, disciplined, efficient soldiers, attests your loyalty, and proclaims your readiness, should your country call for your services, to do battle for your Queen, your native land, your hearths and homes, and all that men hold dear—your readiness with strong right hand to hurl back from the free soil of our great Dominion any invading foe who should dare to desecrate it with his accursed tread—your readiness to

"Strike for your altars and your fires,
Strike for the green graves of your sires,
Strike till the last armed foe expires,
(Strike for) God and your native land."

Yes, my hearers, you are the Queen's Own. I ask you, in conclusion, are you the Lord's Own? You are good soldiers of Victoria. As a commissioned officer in the Lord's army, I ask you, Are you good soldiers of Jesus Christ? You are loyal subjects to your earthly sovereign; are you loyal subjects to the King of Kings? You are true to the flag of England; are you fighting manfully under Christ's banner against the world, the flesh and the devil? You are all ready to re-echo (as I said) the sentiments of Amasai, and say: "Thine are we, Victoria, and on thy side, thou daughter of England's Royal Line." Can you sincerely, candidly, gratefully say: "Thine are we, O Jesu, and on Thy side, Thou Son of David?"

Oh, if any of you cannot answer "Yes" to these questions, I earnestly beseech you to volunteer for King Jesus NOW. Come to Him in faith and penitence, and accept the free gift of Salvation offered to you in Him. Say to Him, "Thine are we, O Jesu." We are not our own; we are bought with the price of Thine own precious blood. Yield yourselves unreservedly to Him, and, having 'listed in the Holy War, seek, by His grace, to continue His faithful soldiers and servants unto your lives' ends.

Jesus speaks to thee, my brother, and says:

"I gave Myself for thee;
Give thou thyself to Me."

Let the language of thine heart be:

"All I have I offer; all I hope to be,
Body, soul and spirit, all I yield to Thee."

"Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer,
Welcome to this heart of mine;
Lord, I make a full surrender,
Every power and thought be Thine,
Thine entirely—
Through eternal ages Thine."